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ABSTRACT

This easy-to-read book with worksheets and instructional guides details a simple organizational portfolio method that has been used for over 6 years to obtain over one-half million dollars in scholarships for migrant students. Following an introduction, chapter 2, "Path of Hard Work," discusses scholarship qualifications such as a 3.0 grade point average, SAT scores, community service, extracurricular activities, work experience, and awards. Chapter 3 describes how to organize a scholarship application portfolio. The first step is a worksheet with short- and long-range goals and action steps to accomplish them. A scholarship checklist is presented that helps the student visualize what needs to be completed and added to the portfolio. Sources of information for obtaining scholarships are listed, and 21 Web sites of scholarship resources are given. A brief section warns about scholarship scams. The importance of student essays is explained, and pointers on writing effective ones are given. Three sample scholarship essays by migrant students are provided. Scholarship recommendation letters are a key element in determining scholarship awards. A suggested form for requesting scholarship recommendation letters is supplied, along with advice on when to request one, how many to request, what information to supply with the request, and from whom to request them. A form for a scholarship nomination application is supplied, and advice is given for completing the application. (TD)

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Path to Scholarships

"Making Dreams Come True"

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Path to Scholarships

"Making Dreams Come True"

By

June McBride

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stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means
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Out of respect for the time I have spent the last six years as an educator helping
students obtain scholarships, please do not photocopy any portion of this book
without permission, except the following students' worksheets:

Community Service Form, Planning My Life and My Future,
Senior Scholarship Checklist, Scholarship Nomination Application,
Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letter

Spanish version is now available.

This book is available for bulk purchase. For details write or
call for information.

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I dedicate this my
first work with love and
gratitude to:
my God, my family,
my friends, my students,
the Migrant Staff,
my administrators,
my fellow teachers,
counselors, staff,
parent volunteers,
and all the students
who have a dream
and are willing to pay
the price to follow the path
to obtain a scholarship.
I wish you the best!!
Now take off on that path to scholarships!

Acknowledgments

This is my sixth year working as the Migrant Advocate with Title One, a federally funded dropout prevention program for migrant students. In the past six years, my migrant at-risk students and other students I have helped have received over one-half million dollars in scholarships.

Everything that has been accomplished with the migrant students is because of team effort. Our team consists of Mr. Larry Bagwell, a counselor at West Orange High School, who has been my mentor for scholarships; our principal, Mike Armbruster; and assistant principal, Denise McCarty. Also, our teachers and counselors have written recommendation letters, have served as mentors to our migrant students, and have shown genuine love and concern. They have prepared our migrant students in the classroom academically and have participated in the after school instructional program.

Special acknowledgments have to be given to Dr. Debra Allen, my senior administrator for Migrant Education in Orange County, Olga Marquez, and the Migrant Education Staff at Tampa Avenue who have stood by me always giving me special counsel and guidance. I especially want to dedicate this work to my family: my parents, my children-- Gaspar, Will, Kristy, Brent, Joy, and Joshua-- who are God's special gifts to me, and my husband, Willie McBride, a Spanish teacher at West Orange High School. He has been my husband, my special friend, and companion for 30 years.

Chapter 1

How Can I Find That Path?

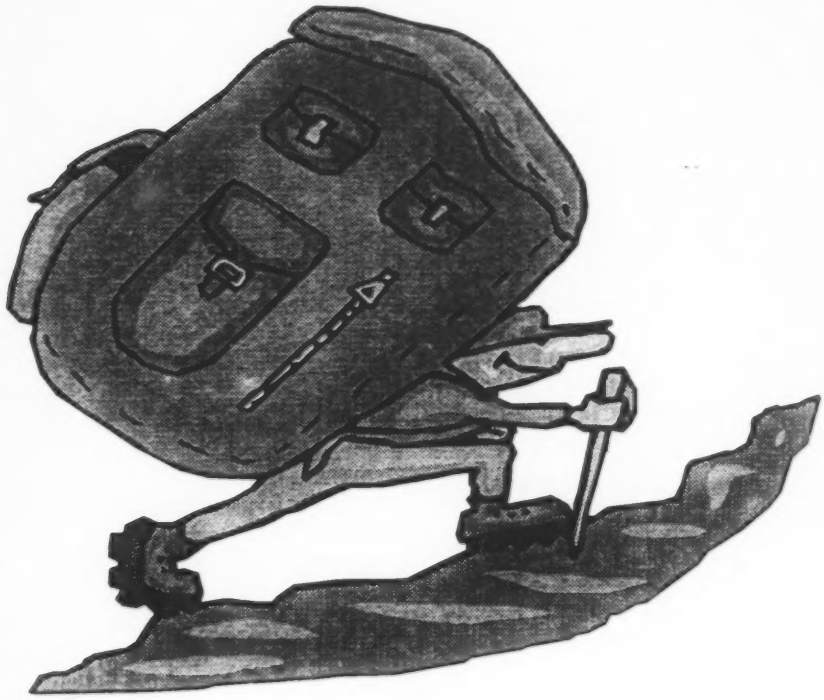
So you need money for college and you need to get a scholarship, but you are not sure which path to take in order to accomplish this task. Everyone says there is money out there, millions of dollars of scholarships that go unclaimed. The big questions asked are, "How can I find the path that leads to scholarships?" and "How can I claim some of these scholarships for my own?"

There are no miracle formulas or magic words that result in scholarships being awarded. There is no way you can pay someone to guarantee that scholarships will be awarded. The road to scholarships is through the *Path of Hard Work* and the *Path of Organization* that will build a solid foundation leading to future success in being awarded scholarships.

Read on so you too can understand the basic steps and principles that have led us on an exciting journey of adventure on a *Path to Scholarships* that has been successful for my migrant students at West Orange High School.

Chapter 2

Path of Hard Work



In our day and age everyone wants quick fixes and instant results. The *Path of Hard Work* is one of the major keys leading to scholarship money. It starts in 9th grade when a student's grade point average begins to count for his future success in pursuit of a scholarship. A student should have a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA from 9-12th grade. A student with a 2.5 - 2.9 GPA will have access to a limited number

of scholarships. The majority of scholarships are highly competitive. The higher the GPA and SAT/ACT a student has the greater the chances for the student to receive a scholarship.

Every student going to college needs to take the SAT and ACT no later than the end of their junior year. Earlier is better. Many scholarships and colleges require an SAT and/or ACT score. If a student delays taking these tests he has eliminated himself from these scholarships. Of course, during the senior year the student should take these tests again to raise his scores. These scores are very important for college admission and scholarship applications. Earning a high score requires one to three years of preparation. This means taking college prep courses in high school including Algebra I and II, Geometry, and higher level math. Students have increased their scores 200 points or more with test preparation done in SAT/ACT prep classes and/or using computer prep programs.

Included in *Path of Hard Work* is *community service.* All scholarship committees want to award a scholarship to dedicated students who have given of themselves to serve others. This community service should start in the 9th grade. It can include service in one's church, a local hospital, community projects, neighborhood cleanups, youth work, coaching youth teams, tutoring, reading to younger children, etc. The opportunities are endless. These community service hours need to be recorded accurately and documented with the date of service, and the signature and telephone number of the person supervising (use the **Community Service Form**). The community service should be recorded on the student's permanent school record and transcript by taking the documentation to the guidance counselor or advisor.

COMMUNITY SERVICE FORM

To have your community service recorded on your permanent school record/transcript you must have the following information filled out completely. Return the completed form to your guidance counselor or advisor.

Name _____ **Student ID #** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State**_____

Zip Code _____**Telephone** _____ **E-mail** _____

Agency	Hours	Dates	Signature and Telephone of Supervisor

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Visit: www.pathtoscholarships.com

The *Path of Hard Work* section is not over! Every scholarship committee wants to award scholarships to students who have held positions of leadership in their school and community and have participated in extracurricular activities. Beginning in 9th grade, students need to join school clubs, take leadership roles in these clubs, participate in yearbook, sports, band, cheerleading, student council, honor societies, school plays, school newspaper, and initiate and take the leadership in a school or community project (this one ranks number one with scholarship committees). Again the list is not limited because the opportunities are many. Remember the quality is more important than the quantity. Every scholarship committee looks favorably on a student who holds a job, has previous work experience, has completed internships or has participated in job shadowing. Many applications will ask if the student works and will request a description of the nature of the job.

If a student has done all of the above the obvious result will be many awards and activities which scholarship committees love to see on the applications. Now do you think a scholarship will automatically be awarded to the student that has done all the right things as mentioned: GPA, SAT and ACT test scores, community service, leadership, work, extracurricular activities, and awards? No! These steps are only the foundation for the *Path of Hard Work* and the *Path of Organization*, which will increase the chances of receiving a scholarship.

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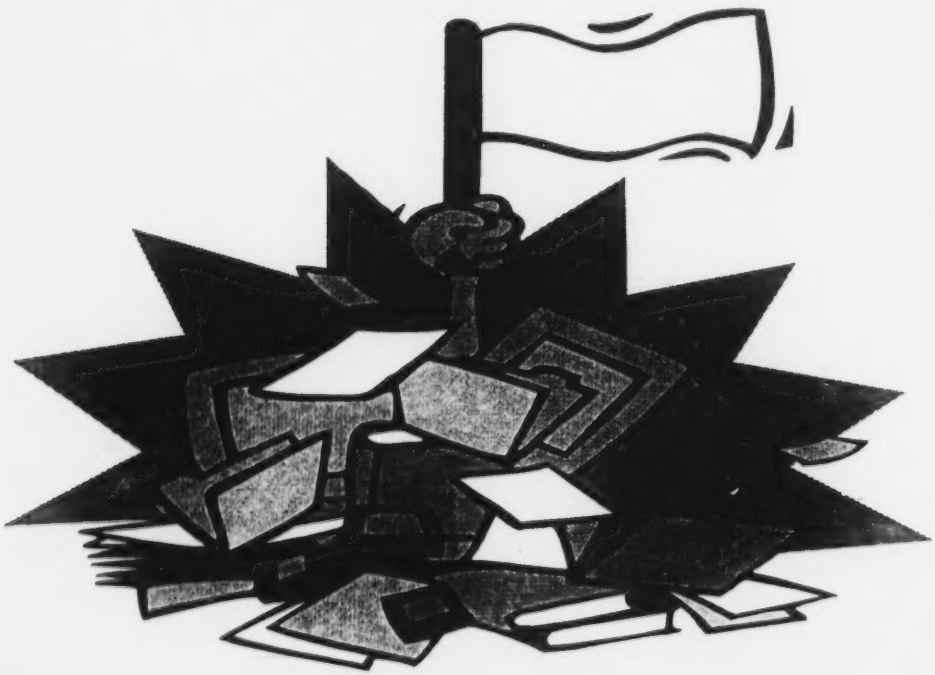
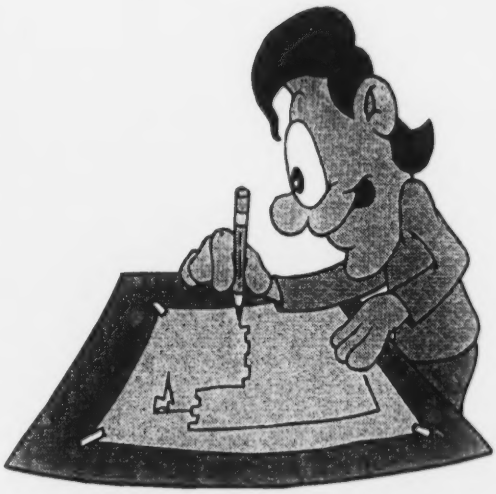
Chapter 3

Path of Organization



Great, everything has been done and there is no scholarship! What has to be done now? It is called the *Path of Organization,* which means organizing a winning scholarship portfolio containing everything needed to successfully apply to all scholarships. The *Path of Organization* is the next key to putting it all together so the scholarship committee knows this student exists, needs a scholarship, and deserves it.

This is the most difficult of all the paths! Many students have done all the right things but do not know how to organize themselves to complete all the scholarship applications. The easy part is the research, knowing about all these wonderful scholarships, and picking up the applications or downloading them from the Internet. Most students fail to organize everything to complete the application (an essay, a resume′, letters of recommendation, transcripts, etc.). As a result, the partially completed application remains in a folder and is eventually discarded. Read carefully through the *Path of Organization* because it will assist you in organizing a winning portfolio that will make the job of applying to scholarships fun and exciting!



Planning My Life And My Future

The steps to the *Path of Organization* begin with the worksheet, **Planning My Life and My Future.** With the counsel of a parent and a counselor or advisor the student should plan short and long-term goals as early as possible in the student's high school and college career. This plan should be reviewed on a yearly basis throughout high school and college.

Some of the many questions the student will begin thinking about and researching are: What are my interests, strengths,

PLANNING MY LIFE AND MY FUTURE

NAME_____DATE_____GRADE____

Short-Range Goals:

1. **4.**

2. **5.**

3. **6.**

Long-Range Goals:

1. **4.**

2. **5.**

3. **6.**

Action Steps to Accomplish My Short-Range Goals:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Action Steps to Accomplish My Long Range-Goals

1.

2.

3.

4.

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talents, weaknesses? What classes should I take in high school and college to prepare for my future goals? How can I get involved with clubs, sport teams, and civic organizations? What community service opportunities are available? What college or graduate school would I like to attend? What might I want to study in college? What careers and majors interest me?

A student is not going anywhere without a plan of action and goals set before him. The earlier a student sets his goals and plans, the higher grades he will earn because now he has a purpose and a plan. He will have a greater chance to successfully complete high school, college, and graduate school. There is something about writing down your goals and dreams that sets a commitment and purpose before the student for future success.

Senior Scholarship Checklist

Using the **Scholarship Checklist**, which should be stapled to the front of the student's portfolio will help the student visualize what still needs to be completed and added to the portfolio. The first item on the checklist states, ***"I have a portfolio with all my information and scholarship applications I am working on each day. My applications are filed according to coded due dates and are marked on a calendar which is visible to me on a daily basis."***

SCHOLARSHIP CHECKLIST

Name _____

_____ I have a **portfolio** with all my information and scholarship applications I am working on each day. (They are filed according to coded due dates and marked on a visible calendar.)

_____ I am doing **research**, working on scholarship applications, and checking for new applications and opportunities.

_____ My **student essay** is completed and saved on a computer disk.

_____ ***Scholarship Nomination Application*** is completed.

_____ ***Recommendation Letter Requests*** have been given to my teachers or professors, counselor or advisor, and community leaders.

_____ I have at least three teacher or professor recommendations returned.
_____ I have my counselor or advisor recommendation returned.
_____ I have a community recommendation returned.

_____ My application to college has been completed and mailed. (Date _____)

_____ ***SAT*** taken on_____ ***ACT*** taken on _____ ***College Placement Test (if needed)*** taken on _____
_____ I have copies of **SAT and ACT** test reports.

_____ For high school students: I have copies of my **college acceptance letters**.

_____ I am presently working on ***Community Service.***
_____ I have my ***Community Service*** hours recorded and I have submitted my forms to be recorded on my transcript.

_____ ***Official Transcripts*** have been requested (order 10).

_____ ***Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*** has been completed and mailed.
_____ Copies of parents and student's **Income Tax forms, W-2s, FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and **SAR** (Student Aid Report).

_____ For high school students: the ***Final Transcript*** of my final grades and credits has been ordered to be sent to the college I will be attending.

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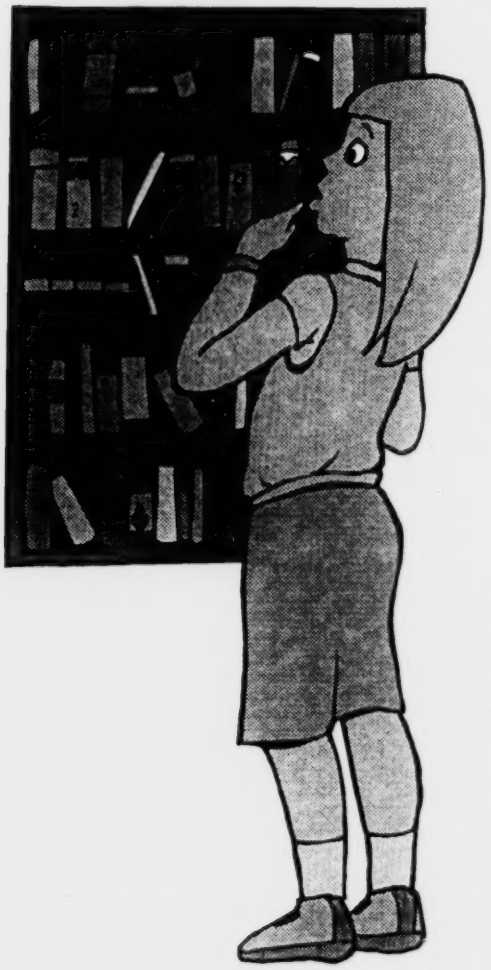
What items should be in the portfolio? There should be at least **ten copies** of each of the following:

1. **Three student essays** (1) full page double-spaced, (1) 300 word essay, and (1) 200 word essay
2. **Scholarship Nomination Application** typed neatly
3. **Recommendation letters** From a minimum of: (3) teachers, (1) counselor or advisor, (1) community leader (but the more the better)
4. **Official transcripts**
5. **Parents' and student's Income Tax returns and W-2s**
6. ***FAFSA*-Free Application for Federal Student Aid and (SAR) Student Aid Report**
7. **SAT & ACT test reports**
8. **Two copies of each Scholarship Application** with the coded due date written on the top right corner of 1st page, filed according to due dates with earliest dates on top, and a calendar with due dates marked
9. A **list of all the scholarships** for which the student has applied, one copy of each completed **scholarship application,** and date submitted
10. **College acceptance letters**

The second item on the checklist says: ***"I am doing research, working on scholarship applications, and checking for new scholarship applications and opportunities."*** There is no need to pay anyone to do a scholarship search. On the Internet a student has unlimited resources at no cost. An excellent example is *scholarships.com* and *fastweb.com* that offer customized, ongoing scholarship research. Students can apply for scholarships on-line and download applications. E-mail is regularly sent to the students informing them about new scholarships that apply to them. The key to receiving a scholarship is to apply, apply, apply, apply, apply, and apply some more! The more a student applies the greater the chances of receiving a scholarship. Do not give up or get discouraged if you were turned down for a scholarship. You must stay motivated and be persistent

never to stray from the *Path of Hard Work* and the *Path of Organization.*



Resources And Research

There are many sources of information for obtaining scholarships. Some of these are:

- The Internet
- Libraries, scholarship books
- Foundations
- Chamber of Commerce
- State Departments of Education
- Private and civic organizations
- Fraternities/Sororities
- College financial aid offices
- High School College/Career Centers
- School guidance counselors
- Employers, banks, businesses
- Newspapers, magazines
- Scholarship directories
- Radio and television stations
- Churches/Religious institutions

Applying early to the colleges of your choice (August-September) of your senior year could result in college-based scholarships which are given only to the students who have been admitted regardless of financial circumstances. Usually these deadlines are early and the scholarships are limited and awarded on a competitive basis. Students with strong academic records should

apply as early as possible. The resources for scholarships are unlimited!

SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Peterson's. Get A Jump. (Guide to college planning and career exploration)

http://www.petersons.com

http://www.finaid.org

http://www.ed.gov

http://www.collegeboard.org

http://www.collegeview.com

http://www.review.com

http://www.kaplan.com

Do not limit yourself only to one scholarship search web site. Search database web sites vary according to your inputted information. Doing Internet searches could also reveal more scholarship sources.

SEARCHES AND DATABASES

http://www.scholarships.com

http://www.fastweb.com

http://www.collegequest.com

http://www.collegeboard.org/fundfinder/html/ssrchtop.html

http://www.collegenet.com/mach25/

http://www.srnexpress.com

http://www.salliemae.com

http://www.rams-fie.com

MINORITIES

http://www.sciencewise.com/molis

http://www.blackcollegian.com

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS ELECTRONICALLY

http://www.collegelink.com

SCAMS

http://www.finaid.org

http://www.ftc.gov

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FINANCIAL AID

http://www.iefa.org/

Scholarship Scams

Be careful of scholarship scams from fraudulent businesses that advertise by mass mailings, flyers, newspapers, and advertisements at high schools and colleges. They operate as clearing houses and scholarship search services. Legitimate scholarship services can be found, but no service can promise that a student will receive a scholarship. With all the resources now available a student can do the same or better at no cost.

Beware of using 900 area code telephone numbers for information. To report or check on a scholarship scam contact the ***Federal Trade Commission*** at P.O. Box 996, Washington, D.C. 20580 or http://www.ftc.gov, send e-mail to consumerline@ftc.gov, or call 1-800-876-7060 the **National Fraud Information Center**. The FTC lists the following six warning signs to help detect a scholarship scam:

1. "This scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."
2. "The scholarship service will do all the work."
3. "The scholarship will cost some money."
4. "You can't get this information anywhere else."
5. "You are the finalist in a contest you never entered," or "You have been selected by a national foundation to receive a scholarship."
6. "The scholarship service needs your credit card or checking account number in advance."

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The Student Essay

The next step in the *Path of Organization* is one of the most difficult and the most crucial in the application process. The student essay is required nearly 100% of the time for the scholarship application.

The student will do the research and have many applications to complete, but the process many times will end here. The reason is because it is very difficult for a student to begin to put on paper what a scholarship committee really needs to know in order to differentiate him from other scholarship applicants. Time is another factor for high school seniors whose heads are in the clouds and the activities and events just do not seem to stop.

When using the **Essay For Scholarship Applications** as a guide it is critical that the student completely cover each one of the statements for his essay. See the sample essays at the end of this book. Everything most scholarship applications require in the essay is included in this guide. The essay should be double-spaced on a computer word processing program so corrections and changes can easily be made and saved on a 3 1/2" floppy disk. In the first essay the student should freely write without worrying about how many words are in the essay. The essay should be reviewed, corrected, evaluated, and edited by someone else. The essay should be set aside for a week or so, then

ESSAY FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

The essay should be double-spaced done on a computer word processing program so corrections and changes can easily be made and saved on a computer disk. With the first essay the student should freely write without worrying about how many words are in the essay. Then the essay should be reviewed, corrected, and then evaluated by someone else.

Set it to the side for a week and come back and evaluate it again. The first essay should be saved and be no more than one double-spaced typed page. The essay should then be narrowed down to 300 words and saved, then one more time to 200 words and then also saved. (1-full page double-spaced, 1-300 word and 1-200 word essay)

1. The opening sentence and paragraph must catch the interest of the reader. It must be different and must stand out above the rest.

2. Describe your family and their educational background.

3. Describe the most challenging obstacle you have faced and how did you overcome it? What made you successful? How did it change your life? What character qualities did it teach you? How have they made you a better person? What qualities make you stand out from other people?

4. Describe the contributions you have made in community service. How has it made you a better person? What impact did you make? What did you learn about life, yourself or other people? What are your accomplishments? How did you make a difference?

5. Explain your dreams for the future, educational and career goals.

6. Write in detail why you want the career in the field you have chosen, including the reasons for seeking this field of study. Why do you feel you will be successful in this field of study? How can you contribute to society or make a difference in the lives of others through this career?

7. Describe in detail any special family circumstances that will effect your ability to have assistance reaching your goal of a college education. Without a scholarship I would not be able to attend college because _____. (as a example of what you could say)

8. Check spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation carefully. Have someone else edit and evaluate your essay. Save on computer disk.

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evaluated and edited again. Keep working on the essay until it is exactly right. The essay should be saved and be no more than one double-spaced typed page. The essay should then be narrowed down to 300 words and saved, then one more time to 200 words and saved.

Many scholarship essays will require 300 words or less, 200 words or less, or one typed page. The student must always follow the directions and give the scholarship committee exactly what they ask for in the application. The application may be eliminated only because the applicant did not follow the directions.

Once the essay is saved on a disk in three different lengths the possibilities are endless for making changes or adding specific information to the essays. Save all the rough drafts and essays from past applications. They could become very useful for new scholarship applications and essays.

How do I write a winning scholarship essay? Follow the **Essay for Scholarship Applications** guide. Spend quality time creating an opening sentence and paragraph that will catch the interest of the reader. It must be different and must stand out from the rest. The student needs to describe his family's educational background. Was a family member an inspiration and role model that could be described? Scholarship committees notice statements like, "I am the first in my family to graduate from high school and go to college," or "I am from a single parent home."

The student should describe struggles, hardships, and

character qualities learned through difficulties. The student needs to describe how these struggles, hardships, and challenging obstacles have made him into the person he is today. Many times students will tell these sad stories, but not tell the result. What was learned from these struggles, hardships, and challenging obstacles?

The following questions need to be answered: Describe the most challenging obstacle you have faced and how did you overcome it? What made you successful? How did it change your life? What character qualities did it teach you? What qualities make you stand out from other people? Describe the contributions you have made in community service. How has it made you a better person? What impact did you make? What did you learn about life, yourself or other people? What have been your accomplishments? Was there a special school or community project which you initiated and led? How have you made a difference? Be truthful about the facts.

A student shows promise by explaining his dreams for the future, and his educational and career goals. He needs to state what he wants to study, the reasons, why he feels he will be successful, and how he can make a difference in the lives of others through this career. Even if a student is unsure of what he wants to study in college, a decision has to be made so it can be explained in the essay.

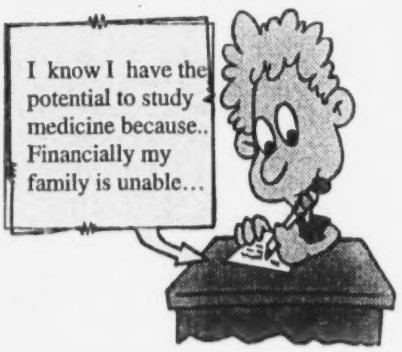
Scholarship committees want students who have direction in their educational goals. At the end the student states why he needs a scholarship and why he will not be able to go to college without one. Check spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation carefully. Have someone else edit and evaluate your essay. Set it aside for about a week. Then come back and evaluate it again. Be sure to save it on a computer disk for changes and additions later.

An essay written from the mind will reach a mind, but an essay written from the heart will reach the heart. The essay must reach the emotions and heart of the scholarship committee. The student must write about what he feels inside. The selection committee must read the essay and see a difference, feel the need, and the emotion of the topic of the essay. They need to see a student who has overcome overwhelming obstacles, a student who has given of himself to serve others in community service, and/or a student who has demonstrated leadership.

The essay must stand out from the rest, telling the story of a truly deserving young person who wants to do something no one in his family has ever done before and without that scholarship his dreams will never come true. It must tell a story of a student who has given many hours of community service and has been involved in making a difference in the lives of people less fortunate in the community. Scholarship

committees want to select students who have taken leadership in their community, school, sports, clubs, church, government, and civic organizations.

Scholarship committees have many applications from students who have similar GPAs, test scores, and awards. It is the essay and recommendation letters that will make the difference for one student's selection over all the others. A scholarship committee might have many outstanding applicants. Often a student with a lower GPA, a minimum amount of volunteer work, extracurricular activities, and awards is selected for a scholarship because an outstanding essay and recommendation letters made the difference.



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Scholarship Nomination Application

The multipurpose form that serves many purposes is the **Scholarship Nomination Application.** The first purpose of this application is that it serves as the actual scholarship application for many scholarships offered to students or as an attachment to a scholarship application. As with all applications it should be neatly typed. Secondly, it is used as a resume′ to be attached to the **Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letters** and as a quick reference to complete scholarship applications.

This assists those writing recommendation letters to recall facts and learn new information about the student. This increases the chances for a quality recommendation letter. It is a time saver to be used as an organizational tool for the student to put down all basic information that all scholarship applications will

SCHOLARSHIP NOMINATION APPLICATION

GPA: W_____ UW_____

SAT: _____ ACT: _____

Class Rank: _____

Scholarship Name _____

Student Name _____ **Student ID#** _____

Address _____ **City**_____ **State**_____ **Zip** _____

Telephone _____ **Parents/Guardian Name** _____

Names and addresses of colleges/universities you have applied and the status of the applications

NAME	*ADDRESS*	*STATUS*
_____		**Accepted**_____
_____		**Accepted** _____
_____		**Accepted** _____

Are there any unusual circumstances you would like to explain or any comments you would like to make concerning your financial situation? Attach additional sheet if needed.

_____

_____

Annual Family Income: __ Less than **$15,000** __ **$15,000-$24,999** __ **$25,000-$39,999** __ **$40,000-$59,999** __ More than **$60,000**

School Activities-Positions Held: _____

_____

_____

Awards & Honors: _____

_____

_____

Community Service: _____

_____

_____

Interests: _____

(Attach "Student Activities" sheet if needed.)

College Major: _____ **Do you work?** _____ **Where?** _____

Describe the nature of your work: _____

Student signature _____ **Parent/Guardian signature** _____

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Visit: www.pathtoscholarships.com

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name _____ _____ **Student ID#** _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____

Zip Code _____ **Telephone** _____ **E-mail** _____

School Activities	9th	10th	11th	12th	Leadership Positions

Special Recognition, Awards, and Honors	9th	10th	11th	12th	Comments

Community Service and Involvement	9th	10th	11th	12th	Leadership Positions

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require. As they complete new applications they can use it as a quick reference for information needed on the scholarship application. It can also be used as a supplement to be added to an application when deemed appropriate, and there are no specific directions given that it should not be attached. It should be updated regularly.

Request For Scholarship Recommendation Letters

Every scholarship will require recommendation letters. This is another major factor preventing many students from completing an application and submitting it. They wait until the very last minute to request recommendation letters.

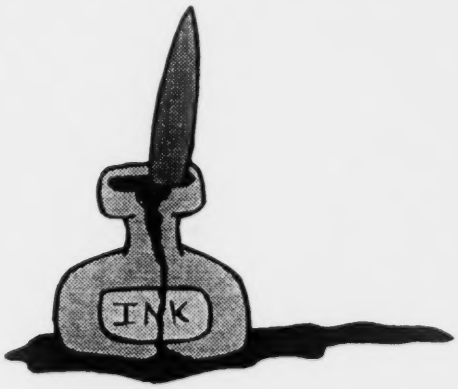
When should a student request a letter of recommendation? A student should make a request before the completion of a class while the teacher or professor has the student fresh in his mind. Too many times students want recommendation letters from instructors they had 2-3 years earlier. The best time for students to request letters of recommendation is in August and September of their junior and senior years in high school. No one is asking for recommendation letters at that time. Around the holidays, at the end of the year, and from January through March every high school senior is asking for a recommendation letter for a number of reasons. They ask for them when the teachers or professors are the busiest and when every student is asking for a recommendation.

The turn around time could be two or three weeks or never. Meanwhile, that scholarship application has a due date and there is not a recommendation letter available.

The request should be in written form with the date, to whom, from whom, and the scholarship deadline/instructions, if applicable. See the suggested form **Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letter**. The request should give the person some direction on what the student needs in the letter. If possible, make an appointment to discuss the details of the recommendation. Some scholarships require the recommendation letter be addressed to the scholarship, but for the majority of scholarships a general letter, "To Whom It May Concern" is sufficient. The student should make as many requests as possible because many will never be returned, will be returned too late or may not be the quality needed. It is in the student's best interest to have as many recommendation letters as possible. This way the student can select the most appropriate letters to submit according to the type of scholarship. Each request should give the person writing the letter of recommendation as much information about the student as possible. The **Scholarship Nomination Application,** the student essay, transcripts, and any reminders or references to past work should be attached for reference. This helps the person writing the recommendation letter truly know, understand the student, and write a letter that could make a difference in the student being awarded a scholarship. Remember to write a thank you note

expressing appreciation for the recommendation letter.

Remember the more requests given out the greater chance of receiving at least three or more in return. Then you can pick and choose the best ones to be used. Quality recommendation letters are another key element used by scholarship committees when they are narrowing down the finalists.



Three types of letters of recommendation are needed depending on the scholarship: from a teacher or professor, counselor or advisor, and a community leader. The best recommendation letters are from the community organizations for which the student has done community service.

No recommendation letter should be from a relative. Ask for 3 to 5 original copies on letterhead and then make as many copies as you need from these. Teachers and counselors who are assisting students apply to scholarships could add a note to **Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letter**. Recognizing that teachers are busy, an offer can be made for the teacher to send a rough draft that will be typed and placed on letterhead and returned for signature. This is important in helping teachers to be prompt in completing the scholarship recommendation letters. The results have been positive and teachers are thankful for the assistance and prompt turn around time from a request for a letter of recommendation to the final draft. Another key element is that the recommendation letter should be saved to a computer disk. The advantage is obvious, another letter could be ready immediately or changes could be made to address the

REQUEST FOR
SCHOLARSHIP RECOMMENDATION LETTER

Date: _____

To: _____

From: _____

Address_____ **City**_____

State_____ **Zip Code** _____

Telephone _____ **E-mail** _____

Concerning: A Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letter

I am applying for different scholarships that require a letter of recommendation. If you would please write a letter of recommendation for me I would appreciate it very much. Please address the letter "To Whom It May Concern" and include three copies of the same letter on letterhead.

Feel free to write whatever you think is important about me including a description of academic and personal characteristics. Scholarship committees are particularly interested in my intellectual promise, motivation, relative maturity, integrity, independence, originality, initiative, enthusiasm, leadership, and my involvement in community service and extracurricular activities. Please include any information that will help to differentiate me from other students.

Attached are a resume′ (Scholarship Nomination Application) and my personal essay to assist you in the writing of this recommendation letter. Thank you very much for your time.

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REQUEST FOR
SCHOLARSHIP RECOMMENDATION LETTER

Date: _____

To: _____

From: _____

Address_____**City**_____

State_____ **Zip Code** _____

Telephone _____ **E-mail** _____

Concerning: A Request for Scholarship Recommendation Letter

I am applying for _____scholarship that requires a letter of recommendation and is due on _____. If you would please write a letter of recommendation for me I would appreciate it very much. Please address the letter to:

_____

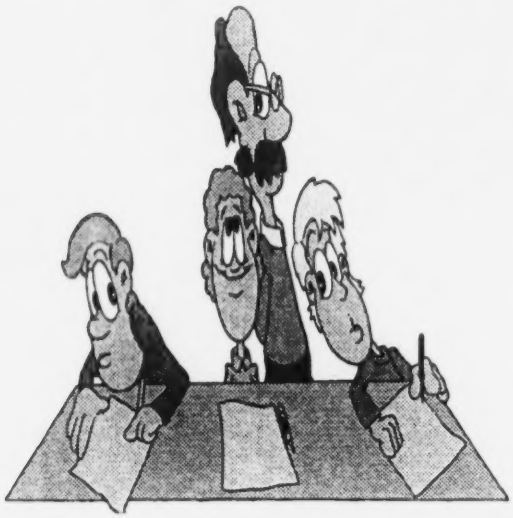
Also, I am applying for other scholarships and I need an additional three copies of your letter of recommendation addressed, **"To Whom It May Concern"**.

Feel free to write whatever you think is important about me including a description of academic and personal characteristics. Scholarship committees are particularly interested in my intellectual promise, motivation, relative maturity, integrity, independence, originality, initiative, enthusiasm, leadership, and my involvement in community service and extracurricular activities. Please include any information that will help to differentiate me from other students.

Attached are a resume' (Scholarship Nomination Application) and my personal essay to assist you in the writing of this recommendation letter. Thank you very much for your time.

June McBride©1999

requirements of another scholarship very quickly and easily. Of course, everything is done with the permission of the person who wrote the letter of recommendation with their signature on the final draft.



Completing the Scholarship Application

Everything is ready to go and now the student is eagerly waiting to fill out the first scholarship application. What makes a winning scholarship application?

First, carefully read over the requirements for the scholarship to see if the student applicant meets the qualifications. Many times students complete a lengthy application only to realize he does not meet all the qualifications.

Secondly, this application is representing the scholarship applicant. It must be neat and legible. It is highly recommended that all applications be neatly typed with each question completed thoroughly with no grammatical or spelling errors.

Next read the directions and follow them carefully for each application. Each scholarship has different requirements. If it requests an essay of 200 words or less do not submit a longer essay. If it requires a picture, include a picture with the application. Pay attention to instructions such as "Put in this exact order." If the directions are not followed it is likely that your application will be

eliminated early in the selection process.

Double check the deadline for the scholarship application. Placing the dead line and date code on the upper right hand corner of the application gives a quick reminder of when that application is due. The date code is: "P" for postmarked, "R" for received by, and "S" for submit to school official. File applications in a folder according to coded due dates and place on a calendar that is visible on a daily basis. Do not work on an application that has a due date three months away when there is a blank application due the following week that should be filled out immediately.

Carefully check the application to be mailed to see if it has to be postmarked by the due date or if it has to be at its destination on the due date. Planning accordingly will result in an application being reviewed and not discarded because it was late. Now the student is ready to mail the application, but there are no envelopes large enough to mail this scholarship application and all the attachments. Plan ahead and purchase the necessary envelopes for mailings.

Finally check the address and to whom it is to be addressed. Do not forget the return address. Before the scholarship application is placed in the envelope to be mailed, make a copy, check the due date, make a last run through the entire application to make sure everything is included, every question has been answered, and everything is in order. When you receive a

scholarship do not forget to show your appreciation by sending a thank you note. It is sad to mention that there are scholarships that have resorted to not awarding the scholarship money until the student sends a thank you note. Many scholarship organizations ask the students to attend special events, luncheons or dinners in their honor. When students are successful at receiving scholarships these events should be a priority over other activities. Students show gratefulness by honoring the scholarship organization with their presence.

Now your path to scholarships has been completed and your scholarship application can be mailed with confidence that this scholarship just might be for ***you!!!***

Scholarship Essays

(Samples)

As sweat poured down my forehead and I fought off the swarms of mosquitoes and my hands hurt from blisters, I hoed weeds around the sugar beets. Life as a migrant farm worker is hard. I work twelve-hour shifts everyday along side my family, spacing the sugar beet plants and cleaning the fields with half mile rows in North Dakota each year.

My parents have no education or preparation and I watch my family struggle just to make ends meet. My parents cannot read or write so it is my responsibility to pay all the bills each month. All these hardships have made me mature quickly. It has taught me hard lessons about working hard and taking my education seriously, even more because I always start school about a month after other students. These struggles have taught me responsibility, determination, and have strengthened my character.

I helped to make a difference in the lives of migrant students struggling academically by tutoring math in the migrant after school program every Tuesday and Thursday since 9th grade. I have impacted our community by helping to implement an America Reads project in which high school migrant students read to younger migrant children in their homes twice a week for six weeks leaving a book with them each time. Working in a nursing home once a month as a volunteer gives me an appreciation for the needs of the elderly.

Having excelled in science and math I wish to study in the medical field and become a pharmacist. I love the thought of helping people and just as a doctor helps their patients, a pharmacist does the same by filling prescriptions.

I know I have the potential, knowledge, and strength to become successful even though my circumstances have been incredibly difficult. I have learned the lessons that have taught me about life. Unfortunately, without a scholarship I will be unable to attend college because my family is not financially able to help me. It will mean giving up my dreams, which I refuse to do.

I am another one of America's young, black males born with two strikes against me, having no father and being reared in a poor, disadvantaged home. The cards were stacked against my graduating from high school, let alone be even on my way to college.

Yes, I saw my mother struggle alone, with no education or preparation, in low paying jobs. That taught me hard lessons about the realities of life and made me work harder at everything I did, especially in school. I wanted to rise above my circumstances by honoring and obeying my mother. My mother is the greatest inspiration in my life because of the things she taught me such as: responsibility, honesty, respect, how to make God an important part of my life, and the true meaning of life and love. My mother is why I am who I am today.

Walking elderly, nursing home, adopted grandparents outside for fresh air taught me in my community service with the "Black Achievers" to appreciate the wisdom and life experiences of those we at times want to put away and ignore. Learning to respect our law enforcement officers and their responsibilities to our community was part of my participation in the "Badge Program" a student volunteer police program. Tutoring migrant children in an at-risk after school program on Tuesdays and Thursdays gave me an opportunity to give of myself to students who were struggling academically.

A major part of my pre-college program in high school has been in sciences and mathematics. Yes, my G.P.A. is only almost a 3.0, but that is because I did not shy away from the most difficult courses my high school had to offer. My love for mechanics, electronics, computers and how they are designed and work has given me an insight into the engineering future.

My mother instilled in me the determination to let no circumstance stop me from my dreams. She gave me the confidence to know I can reach the dream of going to college to study Engineering. Without a college scholarship I will not be able to attend college because my family is financially unable to help me. Although money is very important to go to college, my goals, determination, and hard work, are what really count to know I will be successful in the future.

My teeth chattered as I rubbed my hands near the fire my uncle had made in the apple orchard. Even though I had on three pairs of pants, an undershirt, a blouse, two sweaters, and a jacket I was chilled to the bone. There was no time to lose. We had to continue picking those apples before dark if there was going to be food on the table for tomorrow. This was my routine everyday after school and on the weekends when we traveled to New York each fall to do migrant farm labor.

My mother who was born into a migrant family had a failed marriage at a very young age with two young daughters to support. My mother became very ill and we had absolutely no income. We had no gas, heat, or hot water for almost one year, and were always threatened with eviction. I truly have learned to appreciate the things everyone takes for granted. I have gained a compassion for those who struggle as I did.

These struggles and hardships let me see the consequences of making wrong decisions. It taught me at a very early age how to work extremely hard and how to turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones. This convinced me I would be the victor, not the victim. Forced to face great difficulties in my life at a very early age all my energies have been directed to helping others. From the teens to the children, from collecting food to distributing gifts at Christmas, I work through my church serving our community reaching out to families with the greatest needs. Visiting the nursing homes is a special time for me as I help to bring joy and a smile to many elderly who have been long forgotten by their families. Serving as a role model and tutoring migrant children in an after school program twice a week brings a satisfaction that I am making a difference in someone's future.

Facing skin problems and disorders brought a new challenge in my life that resulted in the aspiration of becoming a dermatologist. Through this I am certain I can make a distinct difference in helping others which would bring great fulfillment and satisfaction. I have met the challenge in high school by successfully completing the most difficult science and math courses to prepare for college and medical school.

I have learned the genuine meaning of struggle in my life and I have experienced the bittersweet taste of suffering. Yet most of all, I have learned to thank my God for everything that I have experienced because it has made me better, not bitter. Without a scholarship, becoming a dermatologist would be impossible, because my family is financially unable to help me pay for a college education. I have the tenacity to set a goal and persevere until it is reached, and to become a dermatologist would be a dream made a reality.

Other Books by June McBride

Key Elements To A Successful At-Risk After School Program

"A Long Term Program With Future Dividends"

A majority of my at-risk migrant students should be dropping out of high school, but instead they are graduating and going to college. The at-risk after school program is a long-term program. Many times the results are not seen until a few years later. It seems that much was not accomplished in that one-hour at-risk after school program that day, and the lesson did not go as planned. It was only one drop in an empty bucket with such little significance. Over a period of time that one little drop each day added up and made all the difference in the world for at-risk students.

What are the key elements that bring success to the at-risk migrant after school program at West Orange High School? These elements are explained very precisely and simplified for anyone who is presently administrating an at-risk after school program or is planning to begin one. The success of an at-risk after school program depends on having all these key elements in order and place. If any of these elements are lacking or are weak there will be unnecessary problems and difficulties.

June McBride, presently the Migrant Advocate at West Orange High School in Winter Garden, Florida, has been in education for the past thirty years. She has two undergraduate degrees, a Masters degree, and experience working/teaching in private, public, and home schooling education with students from elementary school to college. This is Mrs. McBride's sixth year working with Title One, a federally funded dropout prevention program for migrant students.

Path to Scholarships

This easy reading book with worksheets and instructional guides details a simple organizational method that has been used over the past six years to obtain over one-half million dollars in scholarships for the author's students. Resources are everywhere but the biggest problem parents and students face is where to begin and how to organize everything needed to actually apply to a scholarship.

"I have personally used June McBride's organizational scholarship portfolio method with my students. It is amazing how easy and understandable it is to use. The book is written very precisely and comprehensible so anyone can follow the directions with success. It is amazing how simple the method is and how easy it is to use. The best part about this method of organization is that it works!"
Olga Marquez, Migrant Advocate, Orange County Public Schools, Orlando, Florida

Mrs. McBride's organizational method made all the difference in the world for me. I was awarded over $25,000 in scholarships using this portfolio plan!"
Travis Johnson, 2000 Graduate, West Orange High School, Winter Garden, Florida

"Everyone around our high school keeps asking the question, 'Why do June McBride's students receive the majority of the scholarships'? What she does with her students gets results in scholarships time and time again!"
Larry Bagwell, Counselor, West Orange High School, Winter Garden, Florida

"Mrs. June McBride backs up her 'words' with results of her 'works'! June has been instrumental in assisting our migrant students with securing scholarships in record numbers. Our migrant students at West Orange High School are secure with the fact that Mrs. McBride is committed to their lifelong success. As a Migrant Advocate, she has many success stories. I and the entire Migrant Education staff of Orange County Public Schools salute June McBride for her dedication, determination, and commitment to the boys and girls whose lives she continuously touches." **Dr. Debra G. Allen, Senior Administrator, Title I Migrant, Orange County Public Schools, Orlando, Florida**